

THE
THOUGHTS
OF A
MEMBER
OF THE
October Club,
About a
Partition of SPAIN.

What's Hawce for a Goose is Hawce for a Gander.

Printed for John Baker at the Black Boy
in Pater-noster Row.

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S P E E C H

Made in the

House of Commons,

Upon the

STATE of the NATION,

In APRIL, 1701.

By a Member of the OCTOBER CLUB.

Mr. SPEAKER.



T seems at first view hard to determine, whether you would be more obliged to one who should persuade you of the miserable and irretrievable Condition, into which you are precipitating your selves,

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and the rest of *Europe*; or to him, who after you are convinc'd, should shew you how to escape. But as it is a much more difficult Work to convince you of the true State of your Affairs; so it seems to have this Advantage, that when you know your Danger, the frightful and terrible Circumstances of your present Condition will certainly make you improve Opportunity, and lay hold upon every thing that may in the least contribute to save you: And this will be the more easy for you to do, since such means are now in your power, as could hardly be expected on the like occasion; and which if you neglect, you have resolved your own Ruin. You were formerly convinc'd that the *French King* was a Dangerous Neighbour, Powerful and Vigilant; that there was no End of his Designs, no relying on his Treaties; that he could corrupt not only those who under your Princes had the management of *Publick Affairs*, but even your Princes themselves.. The least Increase of his Power at Sea, every inconsiderable Fort taken by him in *Flanders*, alarm'd you in the highest degree. You were jealous of his *Secret Treaties* with your Princes, and so industrious, that you discover'd one, in which the Abolition of Parliaments and Suppression of your Liberties were expressly stipulated; provided *England* would remain his Ally, aganist the House of *Austria*, and the rest of *Europe*.

rope. You were then alarm'd, that no care was taken of the *Protestant* Religion abroad, and began from thence, and the Debaucheries of your Princes, to suspect them of inclining to a Religion that allows Men to live ill, and consecrates the Arbitrary Power of Kings. But now, as if there were not the least ground to suspect any of these things, you are very easy: You concur in every thing.

France is too powerful to be oppos'd; you ate too poor, and too much in debt to make War. Yet *France* has seized the whole *Spanish* Monarchy; and if suffered to enjoy it quietly, he who formerly was able to oppose, may hereafter trample on the rest of Mankind. 'Tis no longer *Condé*, *Linch*, and the Sluces of *Newport* he pretends: His Troops fill *Brussels*, *Antwerp*, and the *Spanish Gelderland*. *Ostend*, and *Newport*, are by our good Conduct added to *Dunkirk*, in order to receive his Royal Fleets, and harbour his Pirates, who are to enrich themselves with the Ruin of our Trade. In this State of things you are for preserving the Peace of *Europe*; which would be yet much better secured by your Slave-ry.

When King *Charles II.* went to *Dover*, and the *French* King came to *Calais*, Gallantry, and Diversion, seem'd to be the only Business of the Two Courts. 'Twas

not then, and in those places, publickly known that there was a Secret Treaty ; yet you not only suspected one, but the Design and Intention of it also, and your Suspicions were found to be well grounded.

Now tho' Two great Armies have been Witnesses, that the Marshal *De Boufflers*, and Earl of *Portland*, were for several Days employed in making a Treaty (and sure it was a secret one, since none of you yet know what it was) you have not to this Day taken the least notice of it. But can any Man suspect the Minister of a Prince, who is said to have rejected a Crown, and that of no contemptible Country, by refusing to join in that very Treaty of *Dover*? Can he, that in a Private Condition resisted the Arts of *France*, be supposed, now he is Master of Three Kingdoms, and of a Powerful State, to risque them all at once, and yield to those Arts he before despised ? To this, whatever other answer I could give, I shall only say this at present, *That we have always but too just ground to suspect all Secret and Close Negotiations with France*. But it seems you thought it not worth your Inquiry, whether these Negotiations were for your Advantage or Ruin. You will say, What ground was there of Suspicion ? For nothing appeared. But who was it, that first as Commissionated, and afterwards

terwards as Ambassador, was employed to treat? Was he an *English* Man? And how were the Plenipotentiaries of this Nation used at the formal Treaty? Were they not as Pageants brought in to attend the Shew? Or as so many Cyphers that without the *Dutch* Men, who made the Figure, could signify nothing? Yet this advantage we had, that the King having not been owned till the Conclusion of the Treaty, the abandoning of the *Protestant* Religion at *Ryswick*, cannot with any Colour of Justice be imputed to *English* Ministers, but only to the Plenipotentiaries of *Holland*. And you could not by any means conceive, or entertain the least Suspicion of indirect Dealing in the Private Treaty, when you saw your selves, and your Religion so fairly dealt with in that which was Publick. Yet methinks the abandoning of our ancient Allies, and entring into the closest and most entire Correspondence with *France*, that has ever been seen between the Two Courts, ought to have moved you a little, and made you doubtful that a Bargain was struck, unless you can think *France* uncapable of entring into any, that may be to your Disadvantage.

Here indeed I know not what to say for you: And the best Account I can give of your Careless Indifference, must be to set before you your present

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Condition ; which yet I fear will both Offend and Terrifie you. I wish it may not throw you into Despair. But such Distempers are only to be Cured by violent Remedies : And I had rather venture your Displeasure, in doing my Duty, than obtain the Friendship of your Enemies by omitting it. 'Tis then thus.

The *English* Nation have now nothing remaining but the outward Appearance, and Carcass, as I may call it, of their Ancient Constitution. The Spirit, and Soul is fled. Jealousy for Publick Liberty is vanished : The Court has so often renew'd the same Arts, Methods and Counsels, and so often made Tryal of the several Parties in the Kingdom, as well as of the Alliance of *France*, in order to compass their Ends, that the Nation begins to grow Weary of Opposing the same Things, and very Wisely thinks there can be no Danger of such Attempts as have so often failed. Besides, you are grown Weary of that old and antiquated Care and Concernment for the Publick, or at least have given it a new and better Turn. Some of you improving your Morals, which are so Necessary for the Preservation of Liberty, in *Constant Gaming* ; as others do their Politicks and Skill in Military Matters, by *Laying Wagers*. And even *Stock-Jobbing* makes you deeply concerned for the Publick Affairs ; Long Sessions of Parliament

ment furnish great Opportunities of knowing the Interests of the several Parties ; by which you must needs know that of the Nation, since the Nation is made up of Parties. And the Court by frequent shifting from one Party to another, has forced you to double your Attendance upon them. So that as well those who are at this time to go off the Guard, as those who are coming on, being equally willing, the one to continue, and the other to enter upon Duty, the Court craftily keeps both Parties under Arms, whilst the Country has nothing to trust to, but a weak, unpaid, and disorderly Militia Party.

And now I think I have sufficiently shewn the Causes of your present Indifference ; since having so much Busines at Home, you can hardly attend to what is doing Abroad ; yet one would think that a certain Affair transacted Abroad, in which your Ministers are said to have had no small Part, and which has made so great a Noise in the World, might deserve a little Consideration, and oblige you to make some Reflection upon the Motive of that Undertaking : Especially since it is of so extraordinary a Nature, as to be the First of the Kind, and like to prove of such Consequence, as may Involve the World in Troubles and Calamities, which perhaps may be of equal Duration with its Trance. And tho', as

a prodigious Comet, it has Alarm'd the rest of the World, you did not see it till of late, and it is already vanished by the Shutting of your Eyes. As to what it may portend, you think it as Foolish to enquire, as Wise Men do to attend the Dreams of Astrologers. In this I wish I could Defend you; but that being utterly impossible, there remains nothing to be done; except only Charitably to undeceive you, and shew if you had time to spare from your great Application to maintain the Interests of your several Parties, what Consequences you must necessarily draw from things you all know and acknowledg'd. By this time you see 'tis the *Partition Treaty*, I mean. I say then, that from the first Appearance of that Treaty, it was not only evident, but foretold by Thousands even of the meanest Capacity, that it wou'd unavoidably throw the whole *Spanish Monarchy* into the *House of Bourbon*. If some Men of more Penetration did happen so far to refine, as to put any other Construction upon the Treaty, it only proceeded from a Charitable Opinion they had taken up, that the Design could not be so Black, as it has since appeared by the Conduct of most of the Partitioners, ever since the Death of the King of *Spain*; Which has Demonstrated to the World with what Intention it was made. The *Letter* of this Treaty tells us of preserving the Peace of *Europe*, by Dismembering

bring the *Spanish* Monarchy ; but the *Spirit* throws it entire into the Family of *Bourbon*, intails an endless War upon *Christendom*, breaks the Ballance which has preserved its Liberty for Two Hundred Years, and will consequently Banish all Remains of Freedom both Civil and Religious from among Men. This Treaty like an Alarm-Bell rung over all *Europe* : Pray God it may not prove to you a Passing-Bell. Poor helpless *Spain* rather than divide the Child, chose to give it to the Harlot to whom it did not belong. And she has got it ; for the *Solomon* who commanded to divide the Child, did it not in order to do Justice. Instead of the Preservation of the Peace of *Europe* (for no great Mischief was ever Designed, but Piety was still pretended) *Europe* must from this time be either in a Posture of War, and so consumed by Taxes ; or in actual War wasted by Blood-shed and Rapine, till she be forced to hold out her Hands to the Shackles, and submit to a worse Condition. These are the glorious Works of such Governours as the World thinks they cannot be without ; perhaps too truly : I mean those who are to execute God's Judgments upon them. 'Tis evident a Treaty was made, which if it had taken Effect even in the plain Meaning of the Words, had broken the Ballance of *Europe*, and Destroyed your Trade in the *Mediterranean*, under the plausible pretence of avoiding a greater Evil ,

Evil, into which it was Contrived to throw you. Yet after all, you are positively Resolved to rely upon the Faith of those who contrived and concerted this, and obstinately bent to continue in Peace, when the rest of *Europe* are to make the last push for their Liberty. As those who are Mark'd out for Ruin, are first Bereft of Understanding, so you who see nothing but Sham upon Sham play'd upon you, seem to be altogether uncapable of making the least Reflection to what End they are designed.

You plainly see, that those who have the Direction of your Affairs, have broken the Ballance of *Europe*, and delivered a great Part of the World into the Hands of *France*. Yet to this Hour it cannot enter into your Heads that this was done for any End, nor can you allow the least Reflection. 'Tis true, Wise Men love not to Determine suddenly: You take yet a surer Way not to mistake in your Determination, which is, not to think at all. 'Tis commonly said, that in this World, Nothing is to be had for Nothing. But you make no doubt, that almost One Half of the World may be given for Nothing. The Proverb, I own, is meant of Money, and of private Persons: But you are of Opinion, that Princes may be more Disinterested, and less Wise, or at least, that it's not much your Business to enquire, whether

ther it be so or not. Besides, there is nothing to direct you in an Enquiry touching this whole Affair, there being no manner of resemblance between this Treaty, and that of *Dover*. For though the *French* King was a Party concerned in Both, yet he is now grown Old, and would willingly, if you permit, pass the rest of his Days in Peace, and only apply himself to Redress the Disorders, and restore the Vigour of the *Spanish* Monarchy. The Condition of the *Dutch* is much alter'd since the *Dover* Treaty, for then they were Partitioned, but now, they are Risen to the Quality of Partitioners. And we are in absolute Security, that nothing can be stipulated to our Prejudice, since he who then gloriously refusing a Crown, broke the Measures of King *Charles* and of *France*, now Treats for us, and remains still as generously Disinterested as ever, no Advantage appearing to accrue by the Treaty either to him or his; so that the *Dover* Treaty affording no Light at all in this Affair, it still remains an impenetrable Mystery, why *France* is allow'd so many Rich Provinces in Possession, and so many in Reversion. For if the Duke of *Anjou* be any more than a Vice-Roy, 'tis in the Power of his Grand Father to make him Less, and dispose of him and his Dominions at his pleasure. But I have found the Secret. You will say, Pray what is it? What you might

might have found out as well as I, if you had any Goodness in you. 'Twas the pious Design of preserving the Peace of *Europe*, on which you see the whole Treaty is founded. You will answer; All the World knows this as well as you. Ay; but you don't sufficiently reflect upon the eminent Degree of that Piety, so clearly demonstrated in a perfect Resignation of all that the World calls Honour and Security, in order to continue the Peace and Quiet of the Poor People of *Europe*.

This was the thing that made us first sacrifice the Ballance of *Christendom*, together with a considerable part of our Trade; after which, when by the Perfidiousness of our New Allies, this Treaty, that had cost us such a Sacrifice to obtain, was impudently broken to the ruin of the Ballance; and putting our selves and our Ancient Allies into the most imminent dangers, we took so high an Affront, so irreparable an Injury, with such an absolute Resignation, and exemplary Patience, as neither by Word or Deed to shew the least mark of Resentment. But like true *Christians*, that we might do Good to those who used us despitefully, and by ways of Meekness and Condescension, bring them back to a Sense of what they owe to us, we delay'd the Calling of the Great Council of the Nation, till they had sent the New King to his Kingdom,

dom, and put themselves into a posture of seizing *Milan* and *Flanders*, which they have since effected. And now we are so moderate, to ask only a most inconsiderable, or rather ridiculous Security; perhaps because the *French* King is now become more solvent. Traly, if we design not to enter into a War, we need not be nice upon any Security; for all Securities are alike, if *France* be permitted to increase in Power.

As to the Security of a Fleet, I say, That a People who are resolved to have Peace with their Neighbours, at a time when 'tis highly the interest of their Neighbours to keep Peace with them, stand not in need of a Fleet, unless it be to make a War of Taxes upon themselves. And if the Enemy, contrary to his present Interest, should unite his whole Sea Force to attack us, such a Fleet as we are now setting out, is exactly calculated to receive Damage and Affront.

But Peace, Cautionary Towns, and Moderate Fleets, will secure our Trade, till we have freed our selves from Debt, and are grown so rich, that we can make War when we please, that is, *after our Enemies shall have disabled all those that we may now have for our Allies, and be at leisure to deal with us alone.* The Honour indeed will be great to

to be single in the Attack, against a Power that hath baffled the rest of the World, but I fear the Danger will be no less, for they always go hand in hand. You'll ask perhaps what one would have the Nation do ? Both Houses have damn'd the Treaty, and some Considerable Men may possibly be punished for it. I know there is more done yet : For, by excusing the Late Chancellor, the blame is thrown upon the King, since in all Free Governments, some body must be answerable for whatever is done with relation to the Publick. But hitherto nothing has been so much as thought upon to retrieve us from that Ruin, into which the Treaty throws us.

This is that, which one might justly expect from the Nation, and not that they should content themselves with railing at the Treaty, whilst they are allowing and concurring in the execution of the real and pernicious Design of it. Some would say: Let the Emperor and the Dutch be Principals in this War ; we who formerly were at the greatest Expence in opposing *France*, will now be Accessaries, and come in when we think fit. It would seem by this Reasoning, that the Power of *France* is diminish'd, and that you can overtake the Growth of it when you please. Who told you that the *Dutch*, if they find themselves abandon'd by you now, will not for the sake

sake of their Trade, resolve to have Peace at any Rate? If the Emperor be abandon'd by both, is not the Business at an end? What Business? All Opposition by which the *French* may be hinder'd from bringing the Affairs of *Spain* into order, and uniting those vast Dominions to their Empire.

And this naturally leads me again to consider, what Return may be expected for the Contrivance and Execution of a Treaty so infinitely advantageous to *France*! For whatever I have said before of a certain pious Design; I fear I shall hardly persuade this wicked Age of it. And tho' the Heathens thought Virtue a sufficient Reward for it self; yet the *Christian* Religion, with more Truth and Solidity, has accompany'd it with other Advantages. If then the Dominion accruing to *France* by this Treaty, may justly be accounted the greatest that ever was procured for any Nation, the Returns ought certainly to be the greatest that can be made; or such as the Benefactor puts the highest value upon. You'll say 'tis hard to judge of them: And that if I would insinuate any thing by the mention I made of the *Dover* Treaty, the Insinuation is ridiculous in a weakly Man, without any Probability of Issue. I answer, If there should be such a Tendency, I hope you do not take it

for a virtuous Inclination, and consequently ought to judge of it by the Temper of the Person, and the Unreasonable ness of every vicious Disorder of the Mind. No well-natur'd generous unthinking People, can ever penetrate the Thoughts of a designing Man. Does not an Old Miser, even tho' he want Issue, increase in Covetousness to the Last Hour of his Life ? Is Ambition a less Passien than Avarice ? Is not the Conquest of free Men more noble than that of Slaves ? Did ever any Hero refuse to die in a great Battel, in which Kingdoms and Powerful States were to fall with him, and serve for Trophies to his Herse ? But I will shew you the King in another View, which perhaps will suit better with your Temper and Disposition.

You all say, Every Prince would be Absolute ; and this Inclination you think so agreeable to the Nature of Man, that no one can be without it. And indeed it would be strange you should trust them with so much Power, under the greatest Temptations of employing it that way, if you thought it a great Crime to do so.

Besides

Besides, 'tis not their interest to use Arbitrary Power cruelly. And you do not know in what Condition, a Prince, who in order to good Designs should obtain it, might at his Death leave you: Perhaps in greater Liberty than you ever enjoy'd. If then pursuant to these or the like Thoughts, His Majesty should have judg'd that the Monarchy of *Spain* will prove a Burthen to the *French*, and rather weaken than strengehen them; by exhausting their Treasures and Men in defending and repeopling those Countries: If he should have consider'd, that nothing can so effectually oppose the great and growing Power of *France*, as the United and Neighbouring Force of *England* and *Holland*; Countries abounding in People, Riches, and Store of Shipping; provided that Force were upon a right Foot, as well in respect of Secrecy as the Unanimity of Council and Command, flowing from an unjarring Direction, not subject to the Storms of a House of Commons or the Capricio's of a Free People, little conversant in Foreign Affairs; (which you will allow to be a very Natural

ral Thought in a Prince.) I say if upon these Considerations the King, seeing the Confederacy fall to pieces, and open Force ineffectual, proposed to himself, in order to obtain an advantageous Peace, and lay a sure Foundation for the Destruction of *France*, to blind them with the ruinous Fantasm of *Spain*, and promise to enter into any Measures they should propose, in order to deliver it to them, in case they would assist him to establish himself both here and in *Holland*: Was this Design so criminal, or could *France* do less for such a Benefactor? I am afraid, I have put such a Mask of Innocence on this Affair, that you will begin to like it. And in an Age, where Divisions and Exchanges of Countries are so frequently mention'd, who knows whether the Agreement may not be to unite the whole Seventeen Provinces to the Crown of *England*, and in lieu of them to give the Kingdom of *Portugal* to *Spain*, which is a Country as much more convenient for *Spain* than *Flanders*, as Accession of Strength is more advantageous than Ruin.

What

What a glorious Government would the Three Kingdoms and the Seventeen Provinces be? Might they not, when united under One Wise and Absolute Prince (for People of such different Tempers, and so emulous of each other in Trade, seem necessarily to require it) bid defiance not only to *France*, but to the whole World? Might they not for ever establish in themselves the Empire of the Sea, with an entire Monopoly of Trade; especially if it should please him to crown all his other Actions by leaving them possess'd of such Immunities, as might secure the Continuation of their Trade for ever? Is there, after all, such a probable way of resisting the Power of *France*? Or is it not the only way of saving both us and our Religion, which is our main Concern? You being Men of Understanding, I resolve to leave it thus with you, tho' you should think me a Courtier. For according to the Judgment you shall make of what I have said, it will appear whether it be possible to save you

you or not, and consequently whether it be to any purpose to give you or my self any farther Trouble.

*Túegarras iār. Túegarras oñkhatiñk'etaz. Herodotus
Urania.*

F I N I S.

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